NUMB. CCXXXI.

The SPECTATOR.

O Pudor! O Pietas!———Mart.

Saturday, November 24. 1711.

OOKING over the Letters, which I have lately received from my Correſpondents, I met with the following one, which is written with ſuch a Spirit of Politeneſs, I could not but be very much pleaſed with it, and queſtion not but it will be as acceptable to the Reader.

SPECTATOR,

OU, who are no Stranger to Publick Aſſemblies, cannot but have obſerved the Awe often ſtrike on ſuch as are obliged to exert themſelves before them. This is a ſort of Elegance, to which ingenuous Minds are the more liable, and may therefore deſerve ſome Regard in your Paper. Many a brave Fellow, who has put his Enemy to Flight in the Field, has been in the utmoſt Diſorder upon making a Speech before a Body of his Friends at home: He would think there was ſome kind of Faſcination in the Eyes of a large Circle of People, if they were darting all together upon one Perſon. I have ſeen a new Actor in a Tragedy ſo bound up and cramped, as to be ſcarce able to ſpeak or move, and expected he would have died above three Acts before the Dagger or Cup of Poiſon were brought in. It would not be amiſs, if ſuch an one were firſt introduced as a Ghoſt, or a Statue, till he had recovered his Spirits, and grew fit for ſome living Part.

This ſudden Deſertion of ones-ſelf ſhews a Modeſty, which is not diſpleaſing, it implies at the ſame time the greateſt Reſpect to an Audience that can be. It is a ſort of Mute Eloquence, that pleads for their Favour much better than words could do; and we find their Generoſity naturally moved to ſupport thoſe who are in ſo much Perplexity to entertain them. I was extreamly pleaſed with a late Inſtance of this kind at the Theatre of *Almuhide*, in the Encouragement given to a young Singer, whoſe more than ordinary Concern for her Firſt Appearance, recommended her leſs than her agreeable Voice, and juſt Performance. Meer Baſhfullneſs, without Merit, is very ſilly, and Merit, without Modeſty, inſolent: But Modeſt Merit has a double Claim to Acceptance, and generally meets with as many Patrons as Admirers.

I am, &c.

It is impoſſible that a Perſon ſhould exert himſelf to Advantage in an Aſſembly, whether it be to ſing or ſpeak, who lies under too great Oppreſſions of Modeſty. I remember, upon talking with a Friend of mine concerning the force of Pronunciation, our Diſcourſe led us into the Enumeration of the ſeveral Organs of Speech, which an Orator ought to have in Perfection, as the Tongue, the Teeth, the Noſe, the Palate and the Wind-pipe. Upon which, ſays my Friend, you have omitted the moſt material Organ of them all, and that is the Forehead.

But notwithſtanding an Exceſs of Modeſty obſtructs the Tongue, and renders it unfit for its Offices, a due Proportion of it is thought ſo requiſite to an Orator, that Rhetoricians have recommended it to their Diſciples as a Particular in their Art. *Cicero* tells us, that he never liked an Orator, who did not appear in ſome little Confuſion at the beginning of his Speech, and confeſſes that he himſelf never entered upon an Oration without trembling and concern. It is indeed a kind of Deference which is due to a great Aſſembly, and ſeldom fails to raiſe a Benevolence in the Audience towards the Perſon who ſpeaks. My Correſpondent has taken notice, that the braveſt Men often appear timorous on theſe Occaſions; as indeed we may obſerve that there is generally no Creature more impudent than a Coward,

——Lingnâ melior ſed frigida bello
Dextera———

A bold Tongue, and a feeble Arm, are the Qualifications of *Drances* in *Virgil*; as *Homer*, to expreſs a Man both timorous and ſawcy, makes uſe of a kind of Point, which is very rarely to be met with in his Writings; namely, that he had the Eyes of a Dog, but the Heart of a Deer.

A juſt and reaſonable Modeſty does not only recommend Eloquence, but ſets off every great Talent which a Man can be poſſeſſed of. It heightens all the Vertues which it accompanies; like the Shades in Paintings, it raiſes and rounds every Figure, and makes the Colours more beautiful, tho' not ſo glaring as they would be without it.

Modeſty is not only an Ornament, but alſo a Guard to Vertue. It is a kind of quick and delicate *feeling* in the Soul, which makes her ſhrink and withdraw her ſelf from every thing that has Danger in it. It is ſuch an exquiſite Senſibility, as warns her to ſhun the firſt appearance of every thing which is hurtful.

I cannot at preſent recollect either the Place or Time of what I am going to mention; but I have read ſomewhere in the Hiſtory of Ancient *Greece*, that the Women of the Country were ſeized with

an unaccountable Melancholy, which disposed several of them to make away with themselves. The Senate, after having tryed many Expedients to prevent this Self-Murder, which was so frequent among them, Published an Edict, that if any Woman whatever should lay violent Hands upon herself, the Corps should be exposed Naked in the Street, and dragged about the City in the most publick manner. This Edict immediately put a stop to the Practice which was before so common. We may see in this Instance the Strength of Female Modesty, which was able to overcome the Violence even of Madness and Despair. The Fear of Shame in the Fair Sex, was in those Days more prevalent than that of Death.

If Modesty has so great an Influence over our Actions, and is in many cases so impregnable a fence to Vertue; what can more undermine Morality than that Politeness which reigns among the unthinking part of Mankind, and treats as unfashionable the most ingenuous part of our Behaviour; which recommends Impudence as Good-Breeding, and keeps a Man always in Countenance, not because he is Innocent, but because he is Shameless?

Seneca thought Modesty so great a Check to Vice, that he prescribes to us the Practice of it in Secret, and advises us to raise it in our selves upon imaginary Occasions, when such as are real do not offer themselves; for this is the meaning of his Precept, that when we are by our selves, and in our greatest Solitudes, we should fancy that *Cato* stands before us, and sees every thing we do. In short, if you banish Modesty out of the World, she carries away with her half the Vertue that is in it.

After these Reflections on Modesty, as it is a Vertue, I must observe, that there is a vicious Modesty, which justly deserves to be ridiculed, and which those Persons very often discover, who value themselves most upon a well-bred Confidence. This happens when a Man is ashamed to act up to his Reason, and would not upon any Consideration be surprized in the practice of those Duties, for the Performance of which he was sent into the World. Many an Impudent Libertine would blush to be caught in a serious Discourse, and would scarce be able to show his Head, after having disclosed a Religious Thought. Decency of Behaviour, all outward Show of Vertue, and Abhorrence of Vice, are carefully avoided by this Sett of shamefaced People, as what would disparage their gayety of Temper, and infallibly bring them to Dishonour. This is such a poorness of Spirit, such a despicable Cowardice, such a degenerate abject state of Mind as one would think Human Nature incapable of, did we not meet with frequent Instances of it in ordinary Conversation.

There is another kind of Vicious Modesty which makes a Man ashamed of his Person, his Birth, his Profession, his Poverty, or the like Misfortunes, which it was not in his Choice to prevent, and is not in his Power to rectifie. If a Man appears ridiculous by any of the aforementioned Circumstances, he becomes much more so by being out of Countenance for them. They should rather give him occasion to exert a noble Spirit, and to paliate those Imperfections which are not in his Power, by those Perfections which are; or to use a very witty Allusion of an eminent Author, he should imitate *Cæsar*, who because his Head was bald, covered that Defect with Laurels.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

☞ *There is now printing by Subscription two Volumes of the* SPECTATORS *on a large Character in Octavo; the Price of the two Vols. well Bound and Gilt, two Guineas. Those who are inclined to subscribe are desired to make their first Payments to* [illegible] *Bookseller, in the Strand; the Books being so near finished, that they will certainly be ready for the Subscribers at or before Christmas next.*

The Third and Fourth Volumes of the LUCUBRATIONS *of Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq; are ready to be delivered at the same Place.*

N. B. The Author desires that such Gentlemen as have not received their Books for which they have Subscribed would be pleased to signify the same to Tonson.

By Her Majesty's Company of Comedians.

AT the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane this present Saturday, being the 24th of November, will be presented a Play called Aureng-Zebe: Or, The Great Mogul. The Part of the Emperor by Mr. Keene, Aurang Zebe by Mr. Powell, Morat by Booth, Arimant by Mr. Bowman, Nourmahal by Mrs. Knight, Indamora by Mrs. Rogers, Melesinda by Mrs. Porter.

AT the Queen's Theatre in the Hay-Market, this present Saturday, being the 24th of November, will be performed an Opera called Hydaspes. The Part of Darius to be performed by Maria Rosa Piscina. The Boxes 8 s. Pit 5 s. First Gallery 3 s. Up 1 Gallery 1 s. 6 d. The Boxes on the Stage half a Guinea. No person to be admitted without Tickets. To begin exactly at [illegible]

On Tuesday next will be Published, The new Comedy called The Wife's Relief: Or, The Husband's Return. Written by Mr. Chs. Johnson. Printed for Jacob Tonson at the Shakespear's Head over against Catherine street in the Strand.

These are to acquaint the Lovers of Art, that the Collection of the Late Sergeant Streeter's Pictures, are to be Sold by Auction on Tuesday the 27th, and Wednesday the 28th of this Instant November, 1711, the Sale will begin at One of the Clock in the Afternoon, at his Late Dwelling House in Gerard-Street. This part of the Collection principally consists of Sketches and Designs on Cloth, divers Patterns for Coach and other Painting, Flower Pieces of Van Zoon, not entirely finished, with several Pictures of the Old Sergeant's and other Masters. The Pictures may be seen on Friday, Saturday, and Monday, before the Sale. Catalogues had Gratis, at the Place of Sale. Note, this Collection is to be Sold for the Benefit of his Children, so that all things are to be disposed of, Conditions of Sale as usual.

For Sale by Retail.

At the Wine Vault of Messieurs Smith and Co. under Thavies Inn against Hatton Garden, in Holborn, are to be sold new natural Red and White Oporto Wines, imported by them, now arrived, and just landed, at 16d. per Quart without Doors, 18d. within, new Viana Red at 14d. per Quart without Doors, 16 d. within; new Sherries at 20d. per Quart, Mountain at 18d. per Quart without Doors, and 20 d. within, Palm Canary at 18d. per Quart without Doors, and 20 d. within, Barcelona Deep, Bright Red at 12d. per Quart without Doors, and 14d. within. Note, All the Wines are in their natural Purity. There are good Cellars and Accommodations for Gentlemen.

This Day is Published,

A Translation of Part of Tully's 12th Philippick. Sold by A. Baldwin in Warwick-lane. Price 1 d.

Bibliotheca Streterriana: Being a Catalogue of the Libraries of the Late Mr. Streeter, (Serjeant Painter to K. Charles, James, William, and Q. Anne,) and another Eminent Person deceased; containing a curious Collection of the most valuable Authors in Divinity, History, Astrology, Physick, Travels, Miscellanies, Law, &c. in Greek, Latin, French, Italian and English. Printed by the Elzevirs, Vascolan, Aldus, Gryphius, Stephens, Elzever, and other famous Printers: With several of the Delph. Classicks Printed in Usum Delphini, Variorums, &c. Likewise several Manuscripts, and a good Collection of Pamphlets. Which will be Sold by Auction on Monday the 26th of November, 1711. at the Black-Boy Coffee-House in Ave-Mary-Lane beginning every Evening at 5 of the Clock. Printed for John Harding, Bookseller, at the Post-Office upon the Hill in St. Martins Lane. Catalogues are deliver'd gratis by Mr. Cliff under the Royal Exchange, Mr. Cliff at the Three Crowns on the Hill side, Mr. Clements at the Half Moon in St. Paul's Church-yard, Mr. Barker in Westminster Hall, Mr. Barnes in the Pall-Mall, Mr. Archer in St Martin's-lane, Mr. Archer in Russel Street, Covent-Garden, Mr. Curll in Fleetstreet, and at the Place of Sale. N. B. The Books may be viewed four Days before the Sale begins.

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